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U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118)
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From: Commanding Officer and Commander Task Element 95.11

To: Chief, Naval Operations

Via: (1) Commander Task Group 95.1
(2) Commander Task Force 95
(3) Commander Seventh Fleet
(4) Commander Naval Forces, Far East
(5) Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

Subj: Action Report - 13 June 1951 through 16 September 1951

Ref: (a) Article 0705, Navy Regulations
(b) OpNav Instruction 3480.4
(c) CTG 95.1 OpOrder 2-51 (Revised)

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS:
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DDO DIR 5200.10

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), the Action Report of Task Element 95.11 for the period 13 June 1951 through 16 September 1951, covering the period the Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY acted as Commander Task Element 95.11, is submitted herewith.
2. This is not a complete report of the action of Task Element 95.11 for the given period because the Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY, was CTE 95.11 only on the dates indicated in Part I of this report.
3. The report is divided into 6 PARTS as listed below:
- Part I - General Narrative
 - Part II - Chronological Order of Events
 - Part III - Performance of Ordnance Material and Equipment including Ammunition Expenditures
 - Part IV - Summary of Own and Enemy Battle Damage
 - Part V - Personnel Performance and Casualties
 - Part VI - Comments and Recommendations.

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Part I - General Narrative

A. During the period from 13 June 1951 through 16 September 1951, the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118) with Marine Fighter Squadron 323 embarked, operated off the West Coast of Korea as part of the U. S. Seventh Fleet in Task Force 95, under the operational control of Commander Task Group 95.1.

(1) The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY alternated with the Commanding Officer of the British aircraft carrier HMS GLORY as Commander Task Element 95.11. Normally TE95.11 consisted of one carrier and four destroyers, or destroyer escorts, acting as screening vessels. Occasionally the screen was reduced to less than four ships to meet operational demands and when a destroyer was released to CTE 95.12 to perform night patrols. At least one of the carriers remained on station at all times and the average operating period was nine (9) days. This report covers only the operations of TE 95.11 when the Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY was CTE 95.11, as follows:

(a) 0830 13 Jun 1951	2100 22 Jun 1951
2100 2 Jul 1951	2100 10 Jul 1951
2100 22 Jul 1951	2100 29 Jul 1951
2100 4 Aug 1951	2100 14 Aug 1951
2100 24 Aug 1951	2100 1 Sep 1951
2100 9 Sep 1951	2100 16 Sep 1951

(2) The enemy forces were the North Korean Army and Chinese Communist forces in enemy-held North Korea. No enemy naval forces were encountered by this Task Element. Enemy small craft including sampans, junk, sailboats, small barges and power boats, operating in the rivers, estuaries and along the West Coast of Korea were attacked and destroyed by own aircraft whenever possible.

Part I - General Narrative (Cont'd)

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(3) Typical missions of aircraft were Armed Reconnaissance, Combat Air Patrol, Close Air Support, Pre-briefed Strikes, Target Combat Air Patrol, Naval Gun Fire Spotting, and Photo Reconnaissance. The operating area for the aircraft was roughly the area contained between the coastline and a line drawn from the Han River Estuary through Sinnak to Chinnampo.

(4) The operating area for Task Element 95.11 was in area "Han", South of 39° 15' N and East of 123° 30' E during daylight hours. During darkness the element withdrew to the South. During the period of this report the U.S.S. SICILY operated at various times with the following ships:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| (a) HMAS WARRAMUNGA | (s) USS RENDOVA |
| (b) HMAS ANZAC | (t) HMS GLORY |
| (c) USS HAWKINS | (u) HMS CONSORT |
| (d) USS FISKE | (v) HMS CONSTANCE |
| (e) USS BRADFORD | (w) USS RENSHAW |
| (f) USS CUNNINGHAM | (x) USS BROWN |
| (g) RFA GREEN RANGER | (y) USS U. M. MOORE |
| (h) RFA WAVE CHIEF | (z) HMCS CAYUGA |
| (i) RFA WAVE PREMIER | (aa) HMCS HURON |
| (j) HMS COSSACK | (bb) HMS MURCHISON |
| (k) HMCS NOOTKA | (cc) USS PERKINS |
| (l) USS CONY | (dd) USS KIDD |
| (m) USS CONWAY | (ee) USS NAIFEH |
| (n) HMS MOUNTS BAY | (ff) USS WEDDERBURN |
| (o) HMS ST. BRIDE'S BAY | (gg) USS ORLECK |
| (p) HMS WHITE SANDS BAY | (hh) HMS COMUS |
| (q) HMS CARDIGAN | (ii) HMCS ATHLASKAN |
| (r) HMNZ ROTOTITI | (jj) HMCS SIOUX |

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Part II -

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS *

- 101444/Jun Sicily arrived in Kobe, Japan, for embarkation of VMF 323 personnel and equipment.
- 110530/Jun Departed for Sasebo, Japan and landed aboard VMF 323 aircraft, twenty-three (23) F4U.
- One barrier crash occurred with no pilot injury. One aircraft caught fire on landing with no injury to personnel except the pilot suffered a fractured right forearm.
- 12/Jun Carrier qualified VMF 323 pilots. A total of 31 flights were made, resulting in one barrier crash with class "A" damage to aircraft, and no injury to personnel.
- Moored in Sasebo harbor at 1530 and fueled from the RFA GREEN RANGER. CDR EDMUND S. CARVER, RN, Aviation Officer of CTG 95.1 came aboard for temporary duty as operational advisor.
- 130700/Jun Departed Sasebo for the Yellow Sea Operating Area with HMAS "ARRAMUNGA (DD123) and HMNS VAL GALEN (DD803).
- 130830/Jun Firing exercises on a towed sleeve were conducted enroute to the operating area.
- USS HAWKINS (DD873) and USS FISKE (DD842) joined formation enroute.
- Duties of CTE 95.11 were assumed this date.
- 14/Jun Commenced combat air operations, launching a total of 28 flights, (12 non-combat).
- One class "A" damage barrier crash occurred, pilot uninjured.
- Combat Flights for the day were reported on Air Attack Reports (OpNav form 3480.3) numbers 1 through 4.

* All times local

16/Jun A total of 32 flights were made (12 non-combat), reported on Air Attack Reports 8 through 12.

USS CUNNINGHAM (DD752) was detached to perform Bugatti Patrol after flight operations. (Ref. (c) gives details of Bugatti Patrol)

17/Jun A total of 36 flights were made (12 non-combat), reported on Air Attack Reports 13 through 17.

CAPT BIGELOW WATTS, USMCR, crashed in water after receiving a wave off.

The plane sank immediately with no sign of survivor after thorough helicopter and destroyer search.

USS BRADFORD (DD545) performed Bugatti Patrol during hours of darkness.

18/Jun A total of 28 flights (12 non-combat) were flown this date and reported on Air Attack Reports 18 through 21.

USS CUNNINGHAM (DD752) performed Bugatti Patrol.

19/Jun Bad weather in the operating area hampered the days operations.

A total of 11 flights (4 non-combat) were flown and reported on Air Attack Reports 22 and 23.

One barrier crash occurred resulting in Class "C" damage to airplane and no pilot injury.

CDR EDMUND S. CARVER, RN, transferred to VAL GALEN. HMS COSSACK (DD57) relieved HMNS VAN GALEN (DD803).

USS CONY (DDE508) and USS CONWAY (DDE507) relieved CUNNINGHAM and BRADFORD. USS CONWAY performed Bugatti Patrol.

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20/Jun Bad weather again hampered air operations.
A total of 8 flights (4 non-combat) were flown and reported on
Air Attack Report number 24.
USS CONY performed Bugatti Patrol

21/Jun A total of 24 flights were made (8 non-combat) and reported on
Air Attack Reports 25 through 27. One taxi accident occurred
when a plane with brake failure skidded into the island structure.
USS CONWAY performed Bugatti Patrol.

22/Jun A total of 26 flights (12 non-combat) were made and reported on
Air Attack Reports 28 through 30.
The formation refueled between flights from HMS WAVE PREMIER.
Transferred 1st Lt. J. R. WELLS, USMC to USS CONY for further
transfer to HMS GLORY for intelligence liaison.
USS CONY performed Bugatti Patrol.

222100/Jun Relieved by HMS GLORY; enroute to Sasebo, Japan with HMS COSSACK
and HMAS WARRAMUNGA. Conducted AA firing enroute.

010715/Jul Underway for Korean Combat Zone with HMAS WARRAMUNGA (D-123, HMS
NOOTKA (D-213), HMS MOUNTS BAY (F-627) and HMS WHITESANDS BAY
(F-633) in company.
Conducted A⁴ gunnery exercises. MOUNTS BAY and WHITESANDS BAY
detached upon completion.
Relieved HMS GLORY at 2100.
Secured from Typhoon condition II at 2333.

020910/Jul USS MOORE (DE442) joined formation and ~~came alongside to transfer~~
1st Lt. J. R. WELLS who returned aboard for intelligence duty
after T.D, HMS GLORY.
A total of 29 flights (12 non-combat) were flown and reported

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On Air Attack Reports 31 through 34. One F4U hit by ground machine gun fire; crash-landed. Pilot uninjured; rescued by helicopter.

HMS CONSTANCE (D71) joined formation at 1712.

HMC3 NOOTKA performed Bugatti Patrol.

03/Jul

A total of 33 flights were made (12 non-combat) with one class "A" barrier crash reported on Air Attack Reports 35 through 38. CAPT CALVIN K. CURRENS, USMC, killed in action when hit by ground small arms fire 12 miles SW Pyongyang in strafing attack.

MAJOR WILBUR F. EVANS, USMC, shot down near Sangyong. Recovered by helicopter. Suffered broken pelvis.

04/Jul

HMS WAVE CHIEF, escorted by HMNZS ROTOTITI, refueled screen.

A total of 38 flights were made (12 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 39 through 44.

USS MOORE (DE442) performed Bugatti.

05/Jul

A total of 30 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 45 through 49.

HMC3 NOOTKA (D213) performed Bugatti.

06/Jul

HMMS VAL GALEN (D-803) relieved HMS CONSTANCE (D-71).

A total of 32 flights were made (12 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 51 through 54.

USS MOORE (DE442) performed Bugatti.

071115/Jul

USS TOLEDO (CA-133) with CTG 95, RADM G. C. DYER, USN, embarked, and USS BRADFORD (DD-545) joined formation. RADM DYER was flown to the SICILY by helicopter and, after observing flight operations shifted his flag back to the TOLEDO at 1530.

A total of 36 flights were made (12 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 55 through 60.

USS BRADFORD (DD-545) performed Bugatti.

080600/Jul USS TOLEDO and USS BRADFORD departed formation. HMS JAVE CHIEF (AO), escorted by HMS CONSORT (D-72), joined formation to refuel screen.

A total of 45 flights were made (14 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 61 through 67.

HMCS NOOTKA (D-213) performed Bugatti.

09/Jul A total of 40 flights were made (12 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 68 through 73.

One Aircraft went over port side due to failure of brakes which were damaged by enemy fire. Pilot recovered by helicopter; uninjured.

USS MOORE performed Bugatti.

10/Jul A total of 38 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 74 through 78. U.S.S. MOORE and HMCS NOOTKA were detached.

102100/Jul Relieved as CTE 95.11 by HMS GLODY.

11/Jul Enroute Sasebo, Japan.

19/Jul Enroute Korean War Zone. Conducted battle problem with HMNS VAN GALEN (D-803) and HMAS WAHRAWUNGA (D-123).

2100 - Relieved HMS GLORY as CTE 95.11.

20/Jul A total of 26 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 79 through 82.

USS RENSHAW (DDE-449) and USS BROWN (DD-546) joined formation.

USS BROWN performed Bugatti.

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21/Jul A total of 30 flights were made (10 non-combat).
Flew cover for MIG 15 salvage operation by HMS CARDIGAN BAY (PF).
USS RENSHAW performed Bugatti.

22/Jul A total of 10 flights were made (2 non-combat).
Very poor weather hampered operations.
USS BROWN performed Bugatti.

23/Jul A total of 10 flights were made (4 non-combat) and reported on
Air Attack Report 83.
Poor weather.
USS RENSHAW performed Bugatti.
USS BROWN detached.

24/Jul A total of 43 flights were made (12 non-combat) and reported
on Air Attack Reports 84 through 89.
CAPT BYRON M. BURBAGE, USMC, failed to return from strike; crashed
after being hit by small arms fire while on strafing attack at
Sohae-ri.
U.S.S. RENSHAW performed Bugatti.
U.S.S. ULVERT M. MOORE (DE-442) joined formation.

251130/Jul HMS CARDIGAN BAY (PF), joined formation to transfer CTE 95.12,
CAPT. W. L. M. BROWN, RN, to SICILY for conference on Han River
Estuary Operation.
Screen refueled from RFA WAVE CHIEF.
A total of 31 flights were made (12 non-combat) and reported on
Air Attack Reports 90 through 93.
USS RENSHAW performed Bugatti.

[REDACTED]

260613/Jul Launched helicopter with LT. R. H. TULLIS, MC, USN aboard, to fly to HMNZS ROTOITI (PF) to assist in acute appendicitis operation. A total of 42 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 94 through 103.

261855/Jul JMS GLORY (CVL), HMCS CAYUGA (DDE-218), HMCS HURON (DD-216) joined formation.

27/Jul A total of 44 flights were made by SICILY and GLORY (12 non-combat) with one crash landing due to damaged landing gear and reported on Air Attack Report 104. Pilot uninjured; plane suffered Class "B" damage.

HMS CAYUGA performed Bugatti.

28/Jul A total of 56 flights were made by SICILY and GLORY (14 non-combat) with one barrier crash and reported on Air Attack Report 105.

Plane suffered Class "A" damage when it nosed over; no injuries.

281927/Jul Made Sonar contact. RENSHAW and MOORE were detached from the formation to investigate and were later relieved by CAYUGA and HURON. Anti-submarine patrol continued by CAYUGA and HURON during the night.

29/Jul Continued investigation of Sonar contact while refueling screen from RFA WAVE CHIEF. Final evaluation non-submarine.

A total of 101 flights were made by SICILY and GLORY (15 non-combat) and reported by Air Attack Reports 106 through 108.

292100/Jul Shifted flag of CTE 95.11 to HMS GLORY upon completion of air operations and departed for Sasebo, Japan with HMNS VAL GALEN (D-803) and HMAS TAPRAMUNGA (D-123).

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
04/Aug Enroute Korean War Zone, HMS COSSACK and HMS CHARITY in company conducted AA firing exercise, and battle problem, using own ship's aircraft.

042100/Aug Relieved HMS GLORY as GTE 95.11

050735/Aug USS RENSHAW (DD-499) joined formation.

A total of 34 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 109 through 113.

HMS CHARITY (D-29) performed Bugatti Patrol.

06/Aug A total of 26 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 114 through 118.

HMS COSSACK (D-57) performed Bugatti Patrol.

07/Aug A total of 20 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 119 through 121.

CAPT J. L. KANE, USN, COMCARDIV 17 and CAPT W. A. SCHOECH, USN, prospective Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118) came aboard by plane.

USS RENSHAW (DDE-499) performed Bugatti Patrol.

08/Aug USS RENSHAW (DDE-499) was detached and USS WEDDERBURN (DD-684) joined formation. A total of 12 flights were made (10 non-combat) in very adverse weather and reported on Air Attack Report 122.

09/Aug CAPT J. L. KANE, USN, COMCARDIV 17 and party departed.

A total of 32 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Report 123 through 130.

Refueled formation from RFA WAVE CHIEF (AO).

USS NAIFEH (DE-352) performed Bugatti Patrol.

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10/Aug A total of 36 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 131 through 137.
One aircraft suffered class "A" damage in barrier crash; no injury to pilot.
USS NAIFEH (DE-352) performed Bugatti Patrol.

110900/Aug CAPT W. A. SCHOECH, USN, relieved CAPT J. S. THACH, USN, as Commanding Officer of this vessel and CTE 95.11. A total of 36 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 138 through 143.
USS NAIFEH (DE-352) performed Bugatti Patrol.

12/Aug CAPT J. S. THACH, USN, left by TBM to report for duty as Chief of Staff, COMCARDIV 17. Formation ~~refueled~~ from ~~RFA WAVE CHIEF~~. A total of 36 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 144 through 149.
USS NAIFEH (DE-352) performed Bugatti Patrol.

13/Aug A total of 36 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 150 through 155.
USS NAIFEH (DE-352) performed Bugatti Patrol.

14/Aug A total of 37 flights were made (12 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 156 through 159.
USS NAIFEH (DE-352) and USS WEDDERBURN (DE-684) were detached.

142100/Aug HMS GLORY assumed CTE 95.11.

15/Aug Enroute to Sasebo, Japan for replenishment and recreation.

23/Aug LCDR M. L. VICKERMAN and party of four officers from USS RENOVIA (CVE-114) reported aboard for TAD as observers.

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24/Aug

Underway for Korean War Zone with USS PERKINS (DD-877) and HMAS ANZAC (D-59) in company. Conducted AA firing exercises. USS KIDD (DD-661) joined formation. Assumed CTE 95.11 from HMS GLORY.

251123/Aug

A total of 40 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 160 through 166.

HMAS ANZAC (D-59) performed Bugatti Patrol.

HMCS CAYUGA (DDE-218) joined formation.

26/Aug

A total of 39 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 167 through 170.

HMNS VAL GALEN (D-803) joined formation and HMCS CAYUGA was detached for duty with CTE 95.12. HMNS VAL GALEN (D-803) performed Bugatti Patrol.

27/Aug

A total of 24 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Report 171.

Formation refueled from RFA WAVE PREMIER, escorted by HMS ST. BRIDE'S BAY.

USS PERKINS (DDR-877) performed Bugatti Patrol.

Target Weather closed in during the day.

28/Aug

A total of 4 flights were made (4 non-combat).

Flew weather recon flights but operations area remained closed in.

281532/Aug

USS PERKINS (DDR-877) investigated small craft near formation, identified as fishing craft of Japanese Registry. HMNS VAL GALEN (D-803) performed Bugatti Patrol.

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29/Aug A total of 39 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 172 through 179.
HMAS ANZAC (D-59) performed Bugatti Patrol.

30/Aug A total of 38 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 180 through 187.
USS KIDD (DD-661) performed Bugatti Patrol.

31/Aug A total of 26 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 188 through 190.
Formation refueled from RFA WAVE PREMIER. USS PERKINS (DDR-877) performed Bugatti Patrol.

1/Sept A total of 34 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 191 through 196.

012100/Sept Relieved as CTE 95.11 by HMS GLORY.

192100/Sept Relieved HMS GLORY as CTE 95.11.

101535/Sept Detached ORLECK and ATHABASKAN to investigate sonar contact.
Contact evaluated as non-submarine and the ORLECK and ATHABASKAN rejoined at 1605. A total of 42 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 197 through 201.
HMCS ATHABASKAN performed Bugatti Patrol.

111148/Sept A total of 36 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 202 through 206. Major General C. G. SCHILT, CG 1ST MAW, came aboard to observe flight operations.
USS ORLECK performed Bugatti Patrol.

12/Sept A total of 38 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 207 through 211. USS HANNA performed Bugatti Patrol.

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13/Sept A total of 38 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 212 through 216.
HMS COMUS performed Bugatti Patrol.
MAJ. GEN. C. F. SCHILT departed.

14/Sept A total of 38 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 217 through 221.
HMCS SIOUX performed Bugatti Patrol.

15/Sept A total of 37 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 222 through 226.

16/Sept A total of 37 flights were made (10 non-combat) and reported on Air Attack Reports 227 through 230.

162100/Sept Relieved as CTE 95.11 by HMS GLORY
Enroute to Sasebo, Japan.

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[REDACTED]

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PART III - PERFORMANCE OF ORDNANCE MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT INCLUDING AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES

A. All Ordnance material and equipment operated satisfactorily or has been the subject of previous reports.

B. Ammunition Expenditures (less Training)

	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>
1. <u>Bombs</u>				
1000 # G. P.	0	0	6	0
500 # G. P.	91	333	204	116
Napalm	28	121	102	68
2. <u>Rockets</u>				
5" HVAR	728	2038	704	878
3.25" W.P.	97	0	0	316
3. 50 Cal. Belted	58,235	235,385	177,310	120,300

C. Training Ammunition Expenditures

1. 5" 38 Cal.	1	20	24	10
2. 40 MM	3,805	3,330	5,575	1,247
3. 20 MM	1,442	1,574	2,266	640

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PART IV - SUMMARY OF OWN AND ENEMY BATTLE DAMAGE

A. Own battle damage

1. No battle damage was sustained by the ships of this task element.
2. Damage to aircraft - see Naval Air Warfare Reports submitted for the period 13 June 1951 through 16 September 1951

B. Battle damage inflicted on the enemy.

1. No damage was inflicted on the enemy by the ships of this task element while operating therein.
2. Enemy battle damage inflicted by own aircraft - see Naval Air Warfare reports submitted for the period 13 June 1951 through 15 September 1951.

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PART V - PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE AND CASUALTIES

A. Personnel performance was excellent and in many cases outstanding.

B. Casualties

1. The only casualties sustained were those of VMF-323 pilots which have been covered by previous reports (OPNAV 3480.3).

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Part VI - Comments and Recommendations

A. Doctrine

1. Although no enemy air opposition was encountered by either airborne strikes or the carrier force and its CAP it was found necessary to use an imaginary "watchdog" orbit point for returning flights in order to prevent numerous unwarranted air alerts for the formation. This system worked very satisfactorily and it is recommended that it be made standard doctrine for situations where no ships can be made available for "watchdog" and "tomcat" stations.

2. It must be commented that the international character of the forces which comprised CTE 95.11 were no obstacle to smooth operation. The excellent seamanship and efficiency of the various screen commanders was particularly notable. Combined operations of this kind are felt to be invaluable in building good will and a sound foundation for future United Nations cooperation.

B. Aircraft

1. Most of the F4U aircraft originally embarked had already served through two combat tours and thus were fairly difficult to maintain. This problem was greatly alleviated as replacements were obtained.

C. Equipment

1. The H-2 catapult could not be used in launching aircraft with heavy loads during no wind conditions. This slowed operations noticeably at those times.

2. The SK-3 Air Search Radar had insufficient range to give adequate early warning information. In the same field, the altitude information from the SP

radar was not always reliable, a 2000 to 5000 feet error in reading not being unusual.

3. The present RCM equipment carried has proven of very little value. The ship could use modern RCM equipment which has high possibilities for the CVE.

4. A most valuable electronic aid during the Task Force 95 operations was the DBF, VHF Direction Finder. This equipment was used a number of times to home lost aircraft in bad weather conditions. It was particularly useful to the CVE in view of the short dependable range of the SK-3 Air Search Radar. Of even more value would be a direction finder which is gyro-fed to provide true readings, crystal controlled, and automatic in determining sense. A piece of equipment incorporating those features was observed in operation aboard the HMS GLORY and has apparently been in use in the British Navy for a number of years.

W. A. SCHOECH

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13 NOV 1952

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DOD DIR 5200.10

[REDACTED]
From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118)
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: (1) Commander Task Group 95.1
(2) Commander Task Force 95
(3) Commander SEVENTH FLEET
(4) Commander Naval Forces, FAR EAST
(5) Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

Subj: Action Report for the period of 4 September through 13 September 1952

Ref: (a) OPNAV Instruction 3480.4
(b) CINCPACFLT Instruction 3480.1A

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b) the Action Report of the U. S.S. SICILY (CVE-118), VMA-312 embarked, for the period 4 September through 13 September 1952 is hereby submitted.

2. The report is divided into six parts as listed below:

- PART I - General Narrative
 - PART II - Chronological Order of Events
 - PART III - Remarks on Performance of Ordnance Material and Equipment, including Ammunition Expenditure
 - PART IV - Summary of Own and Enemy Battle Damage
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- [REDACTED]

PART I

DECLASSIFIED

GENERAL NARRATIVE

A. During the period of this report the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118), under the command of Captain Almon E. LOOMIS, 62535/1310, USN, with Marine Attack Squadron Three Hundred Twelve (VMA-312), under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George C. AXTELL, 06857/7302, USMC, embarked, operated as a part of Task Force 95, in the U. S. SEVENTH FLEET, under the operational control of Commander West Coast Blockading and Patrol Group (CTG 95.1).

B. The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118), acted as CTE 95.11 from 2100I 4 September until 2100I 13 September when he was relieved by the Commanding Officer, HMS OCEAN. During the subject period TE 95.11 consisted of the SICILY and its screen, HMS COSSACK (D-57), HMCS NOOTKA (DDE-213) and U.S.S. MARSH (DE-699).

C. The Task Element operated in the vicinity of latitude 37° - 30' N, longitude 124° - 30' E. Its mission was to provide air support for the following tasks which were assigned to the West Coast Blockading and Patrol Group.

(1) Enforce blockade of the West Coast of Korea south of latitude 39° - 35' N to prevent ingress or egress, mining, or supply and reenforcement by sea.

(2) Occupy, control, and defend the following West Coast Islands: SOKTO, CHODO, PAENGYONGDO, TAECHONGDO, YONGPYONGDO, TOKCHOKTO. Protect our sea communications therewith.

(3) Provide escort and air support to own naval forces.

(4) Support minesweeping operations.

(5) Support troops ashore with naval gunfire.

(6) Conduct aerial reconnaissance of the enemy-held West Coast of Korea.

(7) Support friendly guerrilla activities and maintain liaison therewith.

(8) Destroy military installations and other worthwhile targets of opportunity.

This mission included the following specific tasks:

1. Provision of a two aircraft TARGAP by day for Task Unit 95.12.1 in the CHODO-SOKTO area. The tasks of this TARGAP in order of priority were:

(a) Strike enemy artillery activities against own forces.

(b) Give cover against enemy propeller driven aircraft attack.

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PART I (Cont'd)

(c) Keep under regular surveillance coastal area AMGAK to SAGR-RI.

(d) Airstop in the same area if required.

2. Daily armed reconnaissance of the coastal area between the HAN River and the TAEDONG Estuary and reconnaissance of the coast north of the TAEDONG up to HAMCHON at least every other day, to detect and destroy enemy personnel, artillery, vessels, and equipment threatening friendly islands; to keep coastal airfields in the area under surveillance and to detect any mining activity or blockade running. (Important sightings requiring action by surface forces were passed to the appropriate Surface Blockade and Patrol Units.)

3. Provision of strikes as requested by Elements and Units of TO 95.1, guerrilla organizations, and J.O.C. Korea.

4. Conduct of armed reconnaissance, strikes, and interdiction throughout the area west of the following line: HANCHOW - CHUNGMA, thence south down main supply route through HWANGJU to SARIWON, thence along main supply route through SINMAK to the Peace Conference Restricted Area, thence along the western perimeter of the Restricted Area to the HAN River Estuary.

5. Provision of AIRSPOT as requested by Surface Blockade and Patrol Group.

6. Provision of close air support as requested by J.O.C. Korea.

7. Provision of convoy cover as requested by CTF 9A.

D. The enemy forces were the North Korean Peoples Army and "Volunteer" Chinese Communist Forces in enemy held North Korea.

E. Regular coastal reconnaissance indicated that enemy blockade running and coastal shipping continued to be at a standstill. However, enemy small craft were found operating in the rivers and estuaries and were attacked.

Air support for the defense of friendly islands and military installations was continued. This was accomplished by strikes on gun positions threatening these islands and by spotting on coastal targets for patrol vessels in the area. An enemy build-up appeared to be in progress in the HAEJU and WOLSARI coastal areas. Both of these build-ups threatened friendly installations and as a result extra strike effort was placed on them. A considerable number of heavily reinforced positions had recently been built on the WOLSARI peninsula and tunnels were being dug as positions for heavy guns. Efforts were made to knock out as many of these positions as possible but it was found that general purpose bombs, which were the only ones available, were not very effective.

TARGAP was provided in the CHODO-SOKTO area. In the early part of the period only a two plane section was provided but an increase in MIG activity

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PART I (Cont'd)

made it necessary to change to a four plane unit. Since this required an inordinate percentage of the ship's total effort, these aircraft were sent on prebriefed strikes prior to reporting in as TARCAP.

The program of interdiction and harassment which has been in effect for some time was continued. Strikes were made on many targets which were provided by local intelligence forces. These targets were troop concentrations, gun positions and supply dumps. In addition, numerous transportation facilities such as bridges and junks located by reconnaissance were attacked.

During this operating period MIG-15's were encountered on two occasions. On 9 September, in the vicinity of 38°-45'N, 124°-45'E, four MIG's were sighted by six F4U's. The F4U's were in the process of attacking several junks and sighted the MIG's as they entered an attack from six o'clock. They immediately turned into the MIG's who broke off the attack prior to entering firing range. The MIG's, at an altitude of about 10,000 feet and flying at approximately the same speed as the F4U's, boxed in the F4U's for about 5 minutes. Following this the MIG's broke off and departed to the north without making any further attack.

On 10 September in the vicinity of 38°-39'N, 124°-50'E, two F4U's, which were flying at approximately 8,000 feet, suddenly sighted four (4) MIG-15's coming down on their tails from above. The F4U's immediately entered a weave and were successful in meeting the enemy almost head on. On the second weave one (1) MIG-15 was shot down by the F4U's and was seen to go down in flames. The MIG pilot bailed out and was also aflame. Soon thereafter the F4U's attempted to break off the action by heading for CHODO Island losing altitude. The MIG's continued their attacks. One F4U was hit by 37mm fire in the port wing and the pilot bailed out. After this the MIG's departed to the North. Four additional MIG's were sighted at approximately 15,000 feet during the action. The F4U pilot was recovered in approximately ten (10) minutes by a "DUMBO" from POENGYANG-DO but neither the MIG-15 nor the pilot was located. For further details see VMA-312 Air Crew Survival Report No. 15, dtd 8/10/52; VMA-312 Aircraft Action Report No. 74, dtd 8/10/52; VMA-312 Air Combat Report No. 1 dtd 8/10/52.

The total number of sorties for the period was 318 with a total of 597 hours flown. The overall daily average was 63.0 hours flown in 35.3 sorties. The daily average of assigned aircraft was 21.5 and the average daily availability was 15.2.

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PART II

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

9/4/52: At 2100I the Commanding Officer of the SICILY assumed command of Task Element 95.11 and OTC West Coast relieving the Commanding Officer of the HMS OCEAN. The night was spent proceeding to the operating area with the U.S.S. MARSH in company.

9/5/52: Flight Operations commenced at dawn and continued throughout the day. A total of 43 sorties were flown of which 12 were CAP, 12 TARCAP and 19 pre-briefed strikes and reconnaissance. One aircraft was lost on catapult launch and the pilot recovered, uninjured, by helicopter. Details are provided in Part IV below. The Task Element was joined by HMCS NOOTKA during the morning and by HMS COSSACK in the late afternoon. Shortly after arrival of the COSSACK, the NOOTKA was detached for night patrol.

9/6/52: Commencing on schedule, 39 sorties were flown throughout the day. These flights consisted of 12 CAP, 12 TARCAP and 15 prebriefed strike and reconnaissance. One aircraft was lost on catapult launch and the pilot recovered, uninjured, by helicopter. The NOOTKA rejoined at 0900 and at 1730 the COSSACK was detached for night patrol.

9/7/52: Thirty-eight sorties were flown during the day consisting of 12 CAP, 12 TARCAP and 14 strike and reconnaissance flights. One aircraft was lost by ditching while returning from a mission. The cause was engine failure evaluated as probable flak damage. The pilot was recovered by helicopter and taken to friendly territory. The COSSACK rejoined at 0900 and the NOOTKA was detached at 1730 for patrol.

9/8/52: Thirty-three sorties were flown consisting of 12 CAP, 10 TARCAP and 11 strike and reconnaissance. The NOOTKA rejoined at 0900 and the MARSH was detached for night patrol at 1730.

9/9/52: A total of 38 sorties were flown consisting of 12 CAP, 12 TARCAP and 14 strike and reconnaissance. During the afternoon four MIG-15's made a non-firing run on one of this Task Element's strikes. At 0900 the MARSH returned and at 1700 the COSSACK departed for the nightly patrol.

9/10/52: Thirty-three sorties were flown consisting of 10 CAP, 10 TARCAP and 13 strike and reconnaissance. During the afternoon, four MIG-15's attacked a two plane section of TARCAP in the general vicinity of CHODO and in a dog-fight which followed one MIG was shot down in flames and one F4U was damaged. The COSSACK rejoined the Task Element at 1000 and at 1750 the NOOTKA was again detached for patrol.

9/11/52: A total of 35 sorties were flown this date consisting of 10 CAP, 20 TARCAP and 5 strike and reconnaissance. All TARCAP aircraft hit pre-assigned targets prior to carrying out TARCAP duties. During the morning one aircraft was damaged by enemy ground fire but was landed successfully in friendly territory with no injury to the pilot. The NOOTKA rejoined at 1000 and at 1720 the MARSH was detached for assigned patrol.

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PART II (Cont'd)

9/12/52: Due to heavy aircraft damage only 28 sorties were flown this date. Of these, 10 were CAP and 18 were TARGAP, with the latter again hitting pre-briefed targets at the beginning of their flight. The MARSH rejoined at 0945 and the COSSACK was again assigned the night patrol, departing at 1720.

9/13/52: Thirty sorties were launched on this final day of operations. These consisted of 10 CAP and 20 TARGAP with pre-assigned targets. At 0915 the COSSACK rejoined and at 1600 the MARSH was detached for night patrol. At 2100, HMS OCEAN assumed the duties of CTE 95.11. At 2310, as the OCEAN and SICILY passed, the NOOTKA was detached and the SICILY, with the COSSACK as escort, continued south enroute to Sasebo, Japan.

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PART III

PERFORMANCE OF ORDNANCE MATERIAL
AND EQUIPMENT INCLUDING AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE

A. Thirty-six (8.1%) 5" rockets failed to ignite for reasons as listed below:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Cause</u>
13	Pigtails broken in flight.
7	Faulty igniter receptacles.
2	Pigtails disengaged from receptacles due to locking pin failure.
8	Faulty wiring in rocket electrical system.
6	Rockets failed to ignite.

B. Two rockets fell off launcher during arrested landings. The latch pins sheared in Aero 14A combination bomb and rocket launcher.

C. Ammunition Expenditures.

1. During the operating period covered by this report the following ordnance was expended:

By VMA-312 Aircraft:

1000 pound GP bombs	23
500 pound GP bombs	147
260 pound Fragmentation bombs	277
100 pound GP bombs	358
NaPALM Fire bombs	48
20mm rounds	23,600
50 Caliber rounds	61,500

By U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118)

40mm	None
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PART IV

SUMMARY OF OWN AND ENEMY BATTLE DAMAGE

A. Own Battle Damage.

1. Battle Damage to the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118) - None.
2. For damage sustained by VMA-312 aircraft see Naval Air Warfare reports submitted for this operating period.
3. For operational damage suffered by VMA-312 aircraft see Operational Damage Report for September submitted by U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118).

B. Battle Damage Inflicted on the Enemy.

1. By the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118) - None.
2. By Marine Attack Squadron Three Hundred Twelve as listed below:

<u>TARGETS</u>	<u>DAMAGED</u>	<u>DESTROYED</u>
MIG-15		1
Railroad Cars	4	
Transformer	1	
Junks	23	25
Trucks		2
Billoting Areas	4	
Radio Positions	2	
Command Posts	4	2
Troop Concentrations	16	
Power Sub-Station	1	
Rail Bridges	1	2
Road Bridges	25	9
Bunkers	8	6
Trenches	4	3
Supply Dumps	19	1

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PART IV (Cont'd)

<u>TARGETS</u>	<u>DAMAGED</u>	<u>DESTROYED</u>
Buildings (Barracks & Warehouses)	41	106
Gun Positions	37	14
WIA	321	
KIA		659

3. The following damage was confirmed by friendly agents. This damage was the result of one CAS and seven strike missions and is included as a part of the estimated damaged listed in section 2 above.

<u>TARGETS</u>	<u>DAMAGED</u>	<u>DESTROYED</u>
Command Post		1
"SCR 300" Radio		1
Oxen		7
Ox Carts		2
Trucks		2
105mm Gun		1
60mm Gun		1
Barracks		3
Truck	1	
KIA		476
WIA	271	

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE AND CASUALTIESA. Personnel Performance.

The overall performance of personnel was in accord with the highest standards of the Navy and Marine Corps. Entry into combat was accompanied by a fine show of enthusiasm and aggressive spirit by all hands.

B. Casualties.

On 10 September 1952 Captain J. G. FOLMAR, USMC, was forced to bail out over water after his aircraft was hit by an attacking MIG-15. He was recovered by helicopter. He suffered a sprain of the left shoulder.

C. The recommended wartime complement as submitted by this command to COM-AIRPAC dated 22 March 1952 (Conf Ser 074) reflects the personnel requirements of the ship for this type operation.

(1) Air Department: Total numbers adequate. The ship needs one ABC and one AB1, who are graduates of Catapult and Arresting gear school.

(2) Navigation Department: Adequate.

(3) Supply Department: Adequate.

(4) Gunnery Department: 10 to 15 more non-rated men are needed to maintain condition 3 watches and continue necessary upkeep.

(5) Operations Department: All but one rated radioman have received orders to shore duty. In order to maintain the radio crew at an operating level, it has been necessary to request that these orders be held in abeyance until completion of this combat cruise. Cooperation has been received in this matter and is much appreciated. However, it is considered important to note that even with the granted delays in execution of orders, the shortage of petty officers is so acute in relation to commitments that their entire effort must be devoted to operational traffic. This has severely handicapped the training program and it now appears that little substantial progress in training replacements aboard can be expected during the combat period.

(6) Engineering Department: There is an overall shortage of petty officers in the EM, BT and MM ratings. However, the critical stage of training has passed and the total of petty officers is now approaching the allowance list.

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PART VI

SPECIAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. As may be noted from Section E of Part I the operations reported require close liaison with a number of heterogeneous units. Also, CTE 95.11 is given wide latitude in acting upon the intelligence and requests for aid received from these units. It is therefore highly important that commands become thoroughly familiar with the area and its numerous "ground rules" before taking over as CTE 95.11. The SICILY had a face-to-face turn-over from the U.S.S. BATAAN (CVL-29). This included the transfer of various working files and chart overlays as well as background information. An excellent briefing was received from CTG 95.1 staff. In addition, LCDR JOY, RN, who is thoroughly familiar with the operations, accompanied the ship on the first few days of its first patrol. It is considered that the above represents the absolute minimum of preparation required by a command to prepare it for assuming the duties of CTE 95.11.

Several additional things can be done. The Commanding Officer of HMS OCEAN kindly offered to send his Operations Officer LCDR Manley COOPER along for the early phase of the first patrol. This offer was gratefully accepted and the ship benefited greatly from this officer's long experience in the area. Prior to reporting for duty the ship sent the Intelligence Officer on a tour of shore installations in the area and later the Operations and Air Operations Officer visited Joint Operational Command Headquarters, Korea. It is considered highly desirable for officers who can be spared from among the Operations Officer, Air Operations Officer, Air Intelligence Officer and CIC Officer to make a tour of the area before the ship takes over its duties. This tour should consist as much as possible of the following: a visit to J.O.C. Korea, visits to the principal intelligence and other military units in the various friendly coastal islands, a day aboard one of the patrol ships and from two to three days aboard the operating carrier. Early receipt of the applicable operations orders is also highly desirable in order that personnel may make a thorough study of them before the turnover is begun.

B. It is interesting to note that the two attacks by MIG aircraft on F4U's were not as damaging as might have been expected. Low altitude, 9,000 feet and below, and the distance of the MIGS from their bases, 100 to 120 miles, were undoubtedly contributing factors to this. It does appear, however, that the aggressive defense - turning into the attack and setting up a defensive weave was very effective protection.

C. As stated in paragraph I, E above, general purpose bombs were found to be relatively ineffective against the heavily reinforced gun positions on the WOLSARI Peninsula. Tiny Tim rockets and armor piercing bombs will be obtained for use against these positions.

D. A number of attacks were made on areas where intelligence reports indicated that enemy troops were billeted. Troops were very seldom sighted during these attacks and as a result estimates of WIA and KIA were very low. Ground Intelligence, however confirmed 476 KIA and 271 WIA after a series of strikes

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PART VI (Cont'd)

which had resulted in an estimate of no enemy casualties by the pilots. It appears that the enemy is continuing his tactic of concealing his troops on approach of aircraft and that strikes against troops billeting areas are generally more effective than pilot estimates indicate.

E. Hidden gun emplacements and other types of camouflaged targets were found to be extremely difficult to locate. Very low level reconnaissance had been fairly effective for this work in the past, but had proved too costly in planes and pilots to be continued. Photographic coverage was available through J.O.C. Korea by special request but when honored required two to five days to process exclusive of interpretation. Since the enemy makes a practice of moving his guns and other equipment at frequent intervals the above service was not fast enough to be fully effective. It has been recommended by separate correspondence that a two plane photo team in addition to the marine squadron be assigned to the carrier which is on the Yellow Sea Patrol.

F. Approximately one-half of VMA-312 aircraft were equipped with ADF receivers. In order to utilize this equipment, assignment of a frequency was obtained. A TDE transmitter was used and a transmitter key was relocated to be within reach of the air controller. The following procedure was set up. In event of failure of other homing equipment or in an emergency the pilot requested "SISTER". If the operational situation permitted, the Air Controller then sent a ten second dash, followed by a letter identifier and another 10 second dash. With a power of 100 watts good results were obtained up to 50 miles. Even though this equipment must be used with caution in the combat area it is considered well worth-while to make the above arrangements when the ADF is already installed in the aircraft.

G. Early warning and SAR in Korea were coordinated by the 5th Air Force at Seoul. The following circuits were used for this purpose:

(1) West Coast 5th Air Force Navy Liaison Net (voice). This net was used for early warning and SAR in Korea. The most important stations on this net were the 5th Air Force at Seoul, Carrier Task Element 95.11 (SICILY), ADCC at Chodo and Paengyong-Do Islands. Upon occasion Commander Task Element 95.12 also entered the net.

(2) West Coast 5th Air Force Navy Liaison Net (CW). This net paralleled the previously mentioned net with the exception that stations were limited to Commander Task Element 95.11 and 5th Air Force. Upon occasion the Commander Surface Patrol Element (CTE 95.12) also entered this net to file OP and flash traffic to 5th Air Force.

(3) Carrier Task Group 95.1 Task Group Commanders Net. The stations on this net were Commander Task Element 95.12, Commander Task Element 95.11, and most of the ships and task units of Task Element 95.12. This net served to pass traffic between 95.11 and units of Task Element 95.12.

Originally both East and West Coast Navy were on the same Liaison Nets. This was changed just before this ship reached the area and communications on the new liaison nets were very poor during most of the operating period. How-

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PART VI (Cont'd)

ever, it improved toward the end of the period leveling off at about as follows:

<u>VOICE</u>	<u>RELIABILITY AT END OF PERIOD</u>
Chodo	20%
Paengyong-Do	40%
5th Air Force	50%
<u>CW</u>	
5th Air Force	60%

The improvement was the result of the combined efforts of all commands involved. These efforts included tightening down on circuit discipline, better control of frequency shifts, frequency assignment changes, and, it is believed, equipment changes by the 5th Air Force.

One of the most serious aspects of the situation was that Chodo, which was the northernmost station and almost always detected bogies first, was also the one least often received. This was partially overcome by the alertness of the surface patrol in the Chodo area. This patrol passed Chodo flash reports on the West Coast Navy Command Net (CW). The SICILY CAP was also usually able to pick up this information on guard channel and pass it to the ship via VHF. Carriers on the Yellow Sea Patrol should always brief their CAP to be alert to perform this duty. All commands were still studying the situation and making efforts to improve it when the SICILY left the area.

ALMON E. LOOMIS

Copy to:

CNO (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMNAVFE (1) Advance
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COMSEVENTHFLT (1) Advance
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CTG 95.1 (2)
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U.S.S. RENDOVA (CVE-114) (1)
U.S.S. BAIROKO (CVE-115) (1)
U.S.S. BADQENG STRAIT (CVE-116) (1)
U.S.S. POINT CRUZ (CVE-119) (1)

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2 OCT 1952

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From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118)
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: (1) Commander Task Force 76
(2) Commander SEVENTH FLEET
(3) Commander Naval Forces, FAR EAST
(4) Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

Subj: Action Report 6 October through 16 October 1952

Ref: (a) OPNAV Instruction 3480.4
(b) CINCPACFLT Instruction 3480.1.
(c) COMPHIBFORFE Operation Plan No. 10L-52

1. In accordance with references (a), (b), and (c) the Action Report for the period 6 October through 16 October 1952 is hereby submitted.

2. This report is divided into six (6) parts, as listed below:

Part I - General Narrative

Part II - Chronological Order of Events

Part III- Performance of Ordnance Material and Equipment including Ammunition Expenditure

Part IV - Own and Enemy Battle Damage

Part V - Personnel Performance and Casualties

Part VI - Comments and Recommendations

[REDACTED]

ORIGINAL

PART I,
GENERAL NARRATIVE

A. During the period of this report the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118), under the command of Captain Almon E. LOOMIS, 62535/1310, USN, with Marine Attack Squadron Three Hundred Twelve (VMA-312), under the command of Lieutenant Colonel R. E. CAMERON, 007027, USMC, embarked, operated as a part of Task Force 76 in the U.S. SEVENTH FLEET.

B. The Commanding Officer, H.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118), assumed the title of CTG 76.2 at 052300Z. At 090300Z the SICILY reported to Task Group 76.5 and assumed CTE 76.52. At 111908Z, upon being detached from Task Group 76.5, the SICILY assumed CTG 76.2. At 130945Z the SICILY rejoined Task Group 76.5 enroute to operating area and assumed CTE 76.52. Upon entering the vicinity of the objective area the SICILY was detached from Group 76.5 and again assumed CTG 76.2 at 141908Z and retained this designation until JOINT AMPHIBIOUS TASK FORCE 76 was dissolved at 161000Z.

The Group consisted of one (1) escort carrier and two (2) destroyers acting as screen.

C. The Task Group operated as part of Task Force 76 in the Sea of Japan and against enemy forces in the Wonsan Bay - Kojo Peninsula area.

D. The enemy forces were the North Korean Peoples Army and "Volunteer" Chinese Communist Forces in enemy held North Korea.

E. The mission of the Task Group was to provide Air Support in accordance with Annex H, Commander Amphibious Force, Far East Operation Plan No. 1014-52.

F. During the movement phases of the Task Force this Task Group engaged in training and exercises in preparation for the coming operations.

Daily classes in Naval Gunfire Spotting and Tactical Air Observer

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PART I (Cont'd)

procedures were conducted for all VMA-312 pilots. The movement phases allowed ample time for thorough Intelligence and operational briefings prior to the arrival of the Task Group in the objective area.

Continuous reconnaissance of the lines of communications in and leading to the objective area revealed a complete lack of major enemy movement throughout D-Day and D+1 Day.

All flights, upon returning from the objective area, reported Anti-Aircraft fire of the "Automatic weapons" type in the vicinity of the beach and along all main supply routes in the area. The above reports were consistently evaluated as moderate and accurate anti-aircraft fire. Only one F4U from the SICILY suffered serious damage from anti-aircraft fire and the pilot of that aircraft was able to accomplish a successful emergency landing at K18.

At 160215Z two (2) F4U's, while in the vicinity of UTM Grid OU 4035, sighted six (6) MIG-15 type enemy fighters. The F4U's were at an altitude of 7000 feet and flying on a course of 210° True. The F4U pilots heard a transmission on VHF stating that MIG's were in the area and, upon hearing this report, one of the pilots sighted the MIG's at six (6) o'clock. The F4U's initiated a defensive weave.

After following the F4U's for approximately 5 minutes, the MIG's departed without taking any hostile action. The MIG's remained at an altitude of approximately 15,000 feet throughout the encounter.

CIC aboard the SICILY was assigned control of the CAP in the objective area and it is felt that valuable experience was gained by all air controllers and CIC personnel in this operation.

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PART I (Cont'd)

The total number of sorties for the period was 127 with a total of 374.5 hours flown. The following is a breakdown of the total sorties flown: 41 CAP; 36 Naval Gunfire Spot; 28 Tactical Air Observer; and 22 reconnaissance.

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PART II

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

- 060827Z The U.S.S. SICILY under the command of Captain Almon E. LOOMIS departed Sasebo, Japan for Otaru, Hokkaido, Japan. VMA-312, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel R. E. CAMERON, USMC, was embarked. The screen consisted of the U.S.S. BLUE (DD-744) and the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748).
- 070542Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. BLUE (DD-744).
- 070714Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748).
- 082217Z Arrived Otaru, Japan.
- 090300Z Commanding Officer U.S.S. SICILY assumed OTE 76.52 and reported to Task Group 76.5.
- 090545Z Underway from Otaru and joined Task Group 76.5. Enroute to the objective area.
- 100201Z Exercised at tactical drills.
- 100504Z Exercised the crew at general quarters.
- 111908Z Detached from TG 76.5 and assumed CTG 76.2.
- 111950Z The U.S.S. KNOX (DD-742) and the U.S.S. HOLLISTER (DD-788) joined and formed screen.
- 112102Z Commenced flight operations for Rehearsal of Joint Amphibious Landing.
- 120920Z Secured from flight operations. During this day with twenty-four (24) aircraft on board, an average of seventeen (17) aircraft were available. A total of twenty-six (26) sorties were flown.

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PART II (Cont'd)

Fifteen (15) of these were CAP flights, three (3) were for tactical air observation and eight (8) were simulated naval gunfire spot and close air support. A total of 81.5 hours were flown during the day.

122100Z Commenced flight operations.

122139Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. HOLLISTER (DD-788).

122300Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. KNOX (DD-742).

130850Z Secured flight operations. During this day there were twenty-four (24) aircraft on board and an average availability of sixteen (16). Fifteen (15) CAP flights were flown for a total of fifty-six (56) flying hours.

130945Z Rejoined TG 76.5.

132057Z Commenced flight operations.

140619Z Secured from flight operations. During this day twenty-four (24) aircraft were aboard and an average of nineteen (19) aircraft were available. Eight (8) CAP flights were flown for a total of twenty-five (25) flying hours.

141908Z Detached from TG 76.5 to operate as TG 76.2 with the U.S.S. ROGERS (DD-876) and the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748) as screen.

141955Z Commenced flight operations.

150803Z Secured from flight operations.

During this day there were twenty-four (24) aircraft on board and an average of twenty (20) aircraft were available during the day. The SICILY provided Tactical Air Observers for the landing forces and air spotting for the bombardment

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PART II (Cont'd)

ships. Twenty-nine (29) sorties were flown for a total of eighty (80) flying hours. Twelve (12) sorties were supplied for naval gunfire spot, eight (8) for reconnaissance missions and nine (9) to act as tactical air observers. Only the reconnaissance flights were loaded with an external bomb load. Therefore very few targets were struck by aircraft from this ship. The following is a list of the damage inflicted by SICILY aircraft.

<u>TARGET</u>	<u>RESULT</u>
Building	Destroyed
15 Buildings	Damaged or Destroyed
Supplies	Damaged
Road Bridge	Damaged

151134Z Joined Task Element 76.00.

151956Z Detached to operate as TG 76.2 with the U.S.S. ROGERS (DD-876) and the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748) as a screen.

152100Z Commenced flight operations.

160215Z Two (2) F4Us sighted six (6) MIG-15s. The MIGS followed the F4Us for about five (5) minutes and then departed without taking hostile action.

160811Z Secured from flight operations. During this day there were twenty-one aircraft on board and an average of eighteen (18) aircraft were available. Forty-seven (47) sorties, consisting of sixteen (16) tactical air observers, and one (1) CAP flight were flown with a total of

PART II (Cont'd)

one hundred thirty-two (132) flying hours for the day.

The following damages were inflicted on the enemy during the day:

<u>TARGET</u>	<u>RESULT</u>
Buildings	3 destroyed, 2 damaged
4 railroad cars	2 heavily damaged
Trenches	Troops strafed. No damage assessed.

161000Z Joint Amphibious Task Force 76 was dissolved.

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PART III

EXPENDITURE OF ORDNANCE MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT
INCLUDING AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE

A. A total of 148 rockets were loaded during the operation. Seven (7) rockets, or a total of 4.7% of those loaded, were returned to the ship as duds.

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>CAUSE</u>
HVAR	4	Pigtail improperly engaged in igniter receptacle.
HVAR	1	Dud rocket.
HVAR	1	Faulty igniter receptacle.
HVAR	1	Pigtail was broken due to ejected links and brass from guns.

B. Ammunition expenditures:

1. VMF-312 aircraft:

500 lb. G.P. Bombs	22
5" Rockets (HV AR)	152
20 MM Rounds	7,035
50 Cal. Rounds	20,875

2. U.S.S. SICILY:

No ammunition was expended by the U.S.S. SICILY.

PART IV

SUMMARY OF OWN AND ENEMY BATTLE DAMAGE

A. Own Battle Damage.

1. No damage was inflicted on ships in this Task Group.
2. For damage sustained by VMA-312 aircraft see Naval Air Warfare Reports submitted for this operating period.
3. For operational damage suffered by VMA-312 aircraft see Operational Damage Report for 1 October to 18 October, 1952, submitted by the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118).

B. Battle Damage Inflicted on the Enemy:

1. No battle damage was inflicted on the enemy by the U.S.S. SICILY.
2. The following is battle damage inflicted on the enemy by VMA-312 aircraft:

<u>TARGET</u>	<u>RESULT</u>
Building	4 Destroyed
15 buildings	Damaged or destroyed
Supplies	Damaged
Road Bridge	Damaged
Buildings	2 damaged
4 railroad cars	2 heavily damaged
Trenches	Troops strafed. No damaged assessed.

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PART V

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE AND CASUALTIES

A. The following dispatch was received from CTF 76:

"PERFORMANCE OF AIRCRAFT, CIC AND AIR CONTROL PERSONNEL
SICILY DURING JOINT AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE CONSIDERED OUTSTANDING."

B. Casualties:

No casualties were inflicted on personnel of this Task Group.

C. The present ship's COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER with the complement of forty-five (45) enlisted men and six (6) officer air controllers proved adequate for this operation. However, extended operations of this type would require additional enlisted personnel.

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[REDACTED]

PART VI

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Naval Operations.

1. Surface.

Due to the low top speed of the CVE class carrier the usual difficulty of regaining station after flight operations by the "Baker" method was experienced.

In a cruising formation such as 92R when air operations are to be conducted by the independent method, it is recommended that carriers be assigned any one of the following four stations: Van, rear, and flanks. After flight operations the carrier could then return to the most advantageous of the four stations and a great deal of unnecessary steaming and time out of formation could be avoided.

[REDACTED]


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PART VI (Continued)

2. Air.

(a) Air operations were carried on with no unusual incidents. All flights scheduled were flown. The aircraft maintenance crews performed a commendable job in keeping the aircraft flying.

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PART VI (Cont'd)

2. Air (Cont'd)

b. Two (2) barrier crashes occurred in which the tail wheel yoke housing assembly failed. In one case the assembly collapsed, but the tail hook held and the plane stopped short of the barriers. In the second case, the assembly parted and the plane hit barriers number 2, 3, and 4. The tail wheels were unlocked and the landings were made tail wheel first, but in a slight wing-down attitude. The landings did not seem hard nor the skid severe enough to cause material failure. A ^{possible} contributing factor, which maintenance personnel aboard the ship were unable to check for, was the possible presence of imperceptible fractures in the metal. If Dye Penetrant kits were available to the ship, these fractures could be detected. These Dye Penetrant kits are available on the open market and should be made available to fleet maintenance personnel. The kits are small, inexpensive, and simple to use.

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PART VI (Cont'd)

2. Air (Cont'd)

c. The two day turn around in port provided insufficient time for preventive checks and necessary engine changes. A minimum of five days should be allowed.


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PART VI (Continued)

3. Air Defense

b. Identification and evaluation of air contacts by the use of the UTM grid proved cumbersome and inaccurate in the limited objective area of this operation. It is felt that a system of reporting air contacts from a prominent radar reference point in the objective area would permit more expeditious handling of bogies.

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PART VI (Cont'd)

6. The SP radar, due to the nonavailability of spare parts proved to be totally inadequate. This radar is becoming obsolete due to the development of improved types. It is felt that an improved height finding radar is necessary in the effective handling of aircraft and should be installed aboard this type carrier as soon as available.

*not being done
SP is being retained in
this class carrier*

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D. Intelligence:

3. A detailed Flak analysis would be very beneficial to a carrier entering this type of operation in an unfamiliar area. If this information were included in the Intelligence Annex, it is felt that better results would be obtained from the aircraft and possibly a saving in material and availability of aircraft would result.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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E. Logistics:

2. Logistic Support was furnished by Commander Fleet Air Japan and NED Yokosuka. The action taken to expedite delivery of parts required for AOG planes was very good considering the short time allowed. However, it is believed that even better results might have been obtained had it been possible to keep Commander Fleet Air Japan informed of the SICILY's schedule.

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J. Material

1. Bureau of Aeronautics

a. Overage cement in Kits, Repair (Stknr R37-K-500) for MK III Anti-exposure Suits - It is recommended that all subject Kits in stock in NSD Yokosuka and in stock on board the U.S.S. CHOURRE (ARV-1) be inspected and replaced if the cement therein is found to be overage (6 months is the storage limit). It is further recommended that the following action be taken:

- (1) Discontinue procurement of the Kits (R37-K-500).
- (2) When stocks of Kits are exhausted, issue cement (Stknr R52-C-1557), byrd cloth and neoprene impregnated tape.
- (3) Add cement (Stknr R52-C-1557), byrd cloth and neoprene impregnated tape to the Section "A" Allowance list for all applicable supply supporting activities, and symbol code these items (CW) indicating cold weather material.

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PART VI (Cont'd)

1. Bureau of Aeronautics (Cont'd)

b. Tube Assembly, Drop Tank (Stknr R82-CV-VS-48817) - The replacement rate of the tube (commonly referred to as a "goosenock") is high (about 8 tubes per 10 tanks dropped). It is recommended that the source code be changed from M-1 to P or P-1. It is further recommended that it be added to the Section "B" allowance list for F4U-4/4B aircraft. The numerical allowance should be 80% of the allowance of MK 12 external auxiliary fuel tanks.

Almon E. Loomis
Almon E. LOOMIS

Copy to:

CNO (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMNAVFE (1) Advance
COMNAVFE EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMSEVENTHFLT (1) Advance
CTF 76 (2) Advance
COMAIRPAC (5)
COMSERVPAC (1)
COMFAIRJAPAN (1)
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE (1)
COMCARDIV 17 (1)
COMCARDIV 15 (1)
CO, FAIRBETUPAC (2)
COMMARCORPS (1)
CG FMFPAC (1)
CG AIRFMFPAC (1)
CG 1st MAW (1)
CG, MAG-12 (1)
CO, VMA-312 (1)
U.S.S. BATAAN (CVL-29) (1)
U.S.S. RENDOVA (CVE-114) (1)
U.S.S. BAIROKO (CVE-115) (1)
U.S.S. BADOENG STRAIT (CVE-116) (1)
U.S.S. POINT CRUZ (CVE-119) (1)

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PART VI (Cont'd)

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